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ABSTRACT

To meet the economic, political, and social challenges of today's world, teacher education in global and international education is now mandated by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Global and international education is defined as education that develops the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are the basis for decision making and participation in a world characterized by cultural pluralism, interconnectedness, and international economic competition. Following a discussion of ways in which teaching with a global perspective differ from traditional approaches to studying ourselves, other peoples, and the planet, considerations for educating teachers are noted. Included are: (1) global knowledge about the world in general as well as content specific to the subjects the future teachers will teach; (2) simulated as well as personal cross-cultural experiences at home and abroad; (3) content and experiences infused throughout teacher education programs; (4) dealing with the controversial nature of global and international education; and (4) making curricular connections between global education and multicultural education. (LL)



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# TEACHER EDUCATION IN GLOBAL AND INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

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by

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## Teacher Education in Global and International Education

Merry Merryfield

**Introduction**

Over the last two decades there has been increasing concern that American schools are not preparing young people to participate effectively in a world characterized by human diversity, cross-cultural interaction, dynamic change, and global interdependence. In the 1980s the National Governors' Association (1989) pointed to inadequate teacher preparation in global education and international studies as a major obstacle in the ability of the United States to meet the economic, political and social challenges of today's world. Today teacher education in global and international education is mandated by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (see 1995 NCATE Standards [1994]) and addressed through many activities of professional organizations such as the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, the Association of Teacher Educators, and the National Council for the Social Studies.

**What Is Global and International Education?**

Global education develops the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are the basis for decision making and participation in a world characterized by cultural pluralism, interconnectedness, and international economic competition. Growing out of such fields as international relations and area/international studies, world history, earth science, and cultural/ethnic studies, the field of global education recognizes that students must understand the complexity of globalization and develop skills in cross-cultural interaction if they are to become effective citizens in a pluralistic and interdependent world. International education provides knowledge, skills, and experiences that come from in-depth study, work, and collaboration in education in other countries and with international students and scholars in American institutions.

Teaching with a global perspective differs in some ways from traditional approaches to studying ourselves, other peoples, and the planet:

- In teaching about cultures, global educators focus as much on cultural universals, those things all humans have in common, as they do on cultural differences. Cross-cultural understanding, open-mindedness, anticipation of complexity, resistance to stereotyping or derision of cultural difference, and perspectives consciousness—recognition, knowledge, and appreciation of other peoples' points of view—are essential in the development of a global perspective (Case, 1993; Hanvey, 1975; Kniep, 1986).

- The world is seen as a system in which technological, ecological, economic, social, and political issues can no longer be effectively understood or addressed by individual nations because the issues literally spill over borders and regions. The organization of curricula does not separate world cultures or regions but brings them together through study of contact, borrowing and diffusion of ideas, antecedents to current events, and comparative themes and concepts. Persistent global issues such as land use, peace and security, and self-determination are examined across time and place (Anderson, 1990; Kniep, 1986).

- Study of local-global connections leads to recognition that each of us makes choices that affect other people around the world, and others make choices that affect us. Because of this interconnectedness, global education includes knowledge and skills in decision making, participation, and long-term involvement in the local community and in the larger world beyond our borders. Students learn to find and process information from multiple perspectives (Alger & Harf, 1986).

**What Are Considerations in Educating Teachers in Global and International Education?**

*Global knowledge*

Teachers need "global" knowledge about the world in general as well as content specific to the subjects they teach. For example, a language arts teacher not only studies literature from diverse cultures in different world regions but also learns about the historical contexts and cultural/political perspectives from which the authors wrote. Teacher educators work with colleagues in other disciplines to identify academic coursework in the humanities, sciences, and social sciences so that preservice teachers have adequate foundational knowledge and inservice teachers have access to new, emerging knowledge in their fields (Merryfield & Remy, 1995).

*Cross-cultural experiences*

Simulated as well as personal cross-cultural experiences at home and abroad are a significant part of global and international education. Study tours, student and faculty exchanges, semesters abroad, work with international students in American universities and schools, and student teaching in other countries or within different cultures in the United States are some of the ways teacher educators build cross-cultural knowledge, develop skills in cross-cultural communication, and motivate teachers to teach from a global perspective (Gilliom, 1993; Wilson, 1982). Simulations such as BaFa BaFa or RaFa RaFa (experiences at the secondary and elementary levels in understanding and communicating in another culture) and Baranga (an experience in how subtle differences in culture can lead to confusion and conflict) contribute to cross-cultural understanding by helping teachers develop insights into the process of understanding cultural perceptions and the relationship between instructional methods and learning outcomes in global education.

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*Infused throughout teacher education*

Content and experiences in global and international education need to be infused throughout teacher education programs. Field experiences, internships, and sites for school/university collaboration are structured so that preservice teachers work with talented global educators. Courses in foundations, technology, and methods help teachers examine conceptualizations, cases, instructional strategies, curriculum development, interdisciplinary approaches, and assessments in global education. Research courses include relevant studies, literature, and opportunities for action research. Preservice and inservice programs set aside time for teachers and teacher educators to reflect, experiment, and share ideas and experiences with colleagues (Merryfield, 1995; Tye & Tye, 1992).

*Deal with controversy*

Teacher educators prepare teachers to deal with the controversial nature of global and international education. Through readings, role-plays, and collaboration with resource people in the community, teachers reflect upon the reasons for controversies over global education and approaches to resolving such conflicts (Schukar, 1993; Lamy, 1990).

*Make curricular connections*

Teachers learn to make curricular connections between global education and multicultural education. Global and multicultural education overlap in their goals to develop multiple perspectives and multiple loyalties, strengthen cultural consciousness and intercultural competence, respect human dignity and human rights, and combat prejudice and discrimination (Bennett, 1994). Global and peace education also share common concerns over issues such as human rights, self-determination, international conflict management, and conflict resolution. Teacher educators help teachers plan instruction that integrates global and multicultural and peace education.

All of these approaches to teacher education in global and international education are supported by the faculty's shared vision of global and international education, on-going faculty development, long-term collaboration with internationally minded colleagues on campus, in the schools and overseas, administrative leadership, and institutional commitment.

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